1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
Formosa AD1

[10]

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The Setting

T
128 In any community study there is always the question of where to begin outlining the picture of village life; on what does one focus first? While the question is perhaps just as urgent during the actual fieldwork, in the field it is possible to observe and ask questions on many subjects at the same time and to move from one subject to another in the course of an interview. But in attempting to put the ethnography down on paper, the decision must be made where to begin.

I have chosen to begin this book as I began my fieldwork—with a general picture of village life that will provide a context which can give meaning to particular aspects of village life. This picture will be followed in Chapters 3 and 4 by a description of the village livelihood, although it has perhaps been more common to begin Chinese ethnographies with a discussion of family and kinship (here Chapters 5 and 6). The importance of the economic sphere in Hsin Hsing is explicit in the very purposes of this book as noted in Chapter 1 and the conclusions of Chapter 9; its importance was implicit throughout the fieldwork as it will be throughout this book. We now turn then to the setting of the village so that specific topical chapters which follow will have some contextual meaning.

T
131 Travel to Hsin Hsing village from the capital city, Taipei, is neither
F easy nor brief. The approximately one hundred and seventeen-mile
497 trip to Chang-hua, the closest major city, must be made mostly by train via the seacoast or by the interior route through Taichung City. This takes about three hours by diesel express or six hours or more by a local train. It is generally possible to find a seat on the diesel express, but on the local trains one must almost always stand a good part of the way.

F
311 Once out of Taipei the countryside is almost all rice paddies and farmland. Even in the mountain area between Taipei and Taichung, terraced rice paddies form a part of the green and lush vegetation typical of Taiwan. The train goes through a series of tunnels in these rugged mountains, and if one happens to be traveling with a Taiwanese companion, he will probably point out that these tunnels, like the railroad lines, were all built during the Japanese occupation.

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15: U.S. Navy--28-29 (no date) 1944 Formosans
116, 346, 363, 499, 177.33 Japanese
636.33

"In many villages, especially the elongated type built between rivers and irrigation canals, the temples of the patron saints are constructed at corners or bends in the main streets, making them visible from some distance. These have proved a great obstacle in the construction of new streets for motor-[29]ized traffic. Public opinion strongly opposes drastic changes.

The Japanese have not always been considerate of popular sentiment in clearing lands adjacent to some Japanese enterprise. In road-building, Formosan cemeteries have frequently been disturbed and the owners of burial plots forced to move graves to land of little economic use. Many temples and large mansions obstructing government projects have been torn away with little effort to explain or to compensate."

26: Honda--469-470 N-3 (1896) 1897 Formosans
116, 491, 499, 177.49 Japan
636.49

The roads on the whole island are nothing more than narrow paths extending irregularly with corners and curves through fields. Bridges are as good as non-existent. For that reason we had to cover the entire distance to Mount Morrison on foot. [470] When the Japanese started building wide roads, the Chinese farmers were not particularly pleased and expressed the opinion that it was rather wasteful to build wide roads at the cost of useful fields; they felt that narrow paths were perfectly sufficient for pedestrians. Thus it is easy to imagine what difficulties of transportation the Japanese militia encountered when it was sent out to subdue the rebels.

31: Hofmann--612-613 N-3 (1909) 1912 Formosans
116, 137, 311, 499, 563, 177.31 Japanese
636.31

The pigtail which to us symbolizes Chinese traditions, in the cities exerts its rule in the literal as well as the figurative sense, it is a rule which cannot be stamped out. Chinese and Japanese are separated from each other by a difference in culture and beliefs which cannot be reconciled with each other. On the whole the Chinese element predominates and numerically they are so far superior that an amalgamation between the rulers and the subjects in the near future seems out of the question. The Japanese farmers, merchants, and small business men cannot compete with the Chinese; the Chinese are an astute people and they are moreover, better adapted to the [613] climatic conditions on this island. This is another motive for the Japanese to exploit the interior and to penetrate still further into the regions of the aborigines; here they plan to set up business enterprises on a large scale, but for this again they must use cheap Chinese labor. One of these enterprises is the construction of a railroad in the mountains so that the large forested regions in the vicinity of the Niitakayama (cf. Fig. 2, Mount Morrison) may be exploited. The forests are called the Arisan Forest; they have played an important role in Japanese politics during the last few years. The Fujita Company had acquired a concession for timber here; the government had to buy this land again from the company, which had already begun to build a railway, so that the price which had to be payed in all amounted to about two million yen, a sum which had to be granted by the Japanese Diet.

36: Rowe S-4 (no date) 1955 AF1 China AF1
Formosa AD1

of 303,400 metric tons) and that of industrial salt to 67,000 metric tons (as compared to peak production of 465,000 metric tons). The production of chemical fertilizer (33,800 metric tons before the war) had come to a halt. Tea processing plants and pine apple packing plants stood deserted. In short, by V-J Day the ravages of war, materials shortages, and lack of maintenance had almost paralyzed the industry of Taiwan. The railroads had worn out no less than 1400 steel bridges which had to be classified as unsafe to use.

After V-J Day, rehabilitation work on the railroads was given a high priority. Eroded steel bridge spans were removed, worn-out sleepers and rails were replaced, road beds were reconditioned. Today, passenger traffic exceeds the peak load of the prewar period; freight traffic, after tripling itself in one year, is approaching prewar peak.

Rehabilitation of the power system made great demands on the ingenuity of the available Chinese engineers. Little foreign exchange was available with which to buy needed replacements, so that the repairs had to be accomplished by reworking obsolete and broken equipment scattered about over the island. Through tedious patching and repairing operations, and the acquisition of a few spare parts that could not be improved, they tripled generating capacity in two years. By 1951, capacity had reached an all time high of 217,000 KW. Today coal (1,451,000 metric tons in 1952), cement (389,000 tons in 1951), chemical fertilizers (more than three times prewar production), petroleum, cotton yarn (three times Japanese peak production) and cotton piece goods (four times Japanese peak production) have all surpassed prewar production figures.

The sugar industry, which, as in the past, is Taiwan's most important source of foreign exchange, has done less well by comparison with prewar standards, but not, or at least not primarily, because rehabilitation operations failed to be carried out. In 1945, 27 of 36 plants stood seriously damaged. By 1948, all the factories and plantation railways had been completely rehabilitated, and by 1950 sugar production had climbed back to 630,000 metric tons. The Taiwan Sugar Corporation's capacity is now over one million tons a year. In 1949–50, however, sugar dropped in price on the world market, and farmers turned from sugar to rice. In 1951–52, the world market price began to rise, and sugar production is gradually returning to its previous high levels.

Paper and pulp mills, machinery shops, shipbuilding, and aluminum works have, likewise, been gradually restored. Another worthwhile project has been the development of a fishery industry which has improved the Taiwanese diet (including that of the Nationalist Army) without great expenditures. American economic aid has played an important role in the rehabilitation and development of all these industries.

A labor insurance policy was put into effect on 1 March 1950. Its object is described as "safeguarding the livelihood of the workers and promoting harmonious relations between labor and management so as to ensure social security and high production." According to the Labor Insurance Regulations, all workers employed in public and private factories, mines, salt fields, communications, and public utilities in Taiwan shall be insured. It is compulsory labor insurance on a limited scale. The benefits are insurance against injury, death, maternity, disability, and old age. It also has provision for free medical clinics. This new system of social insurance was put into effect with the cooperation of the Chinese Federation of Labor, the Free China Labor League, and the Provincial General Labor Union. Their delegates also sit as members of the legislature of the provincial government.

The government has also carried out a tax reform and overhauled the tax collection system. The reform program went into effect on 1 January 1951. The number of distinct taxes was reduced from 20 to 11, leaving the income, inheritance, stamp, commodity, land, business, slaughter-house, entertainment and amusement, vehicle license, and household taxes.

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494 passengers over an average distance of 9.4
489 kilometers in 1954. The increase in the total traffic volume in recent years has been remarkable -- 943 million passenger-kilometers in 1951 and 2,582 million passenger-kilometers in 1954. In the same period, railroad passenger traffic increased slightly, from 2, 154 million passenger-kilometers to 2,217 million passenger-kilometers.[8]

489 All highway truck services are operated by private concerns; in 1954 there were 455 trucking companies, with a combined total of 2,401 trucks. In that year the companies carried 4.7 million metric tons of goods over an average distance of 27.4 kilometers. However, the actual total volume of trucking on the island may be somewhat greater, since many factories and enterprises own trucks.

With improved roads and better highway facilities -- as in the case of the completion of a surfaced road between Taoyuan and Tainan, the completion of Silo bridge, and so on -- highway transportation systems will expand. The United States is furnishing bus chassis and motor assemblies for this purpose.

499 The completion of Silo bridge deserves attention. Before 1952, the north-south arterial highway was interrupted by the Cho-shui River at Silo. At this point, the river is about 1.3 miles (two kilometers) wide. In order to cross the river, traffic detoured some 53 miles (85 kilometers). With American aid, the government proceeded

8. Statistical Abstract of the Republic of China, 1955, Tables 126-28.

52:Barclay S-5 (nodate)1954 ADl Formosa ADl

cially in chemical and metal manufacturing; their expansion did not have an appreciable effect in the production of all the island.

In other words, in spite of its expansion, industrial production had only begun to make headway in relation to agricultural output. Before 1940, manufactured commodities were still subordinate to Taiwan's farm products (and did not amount to much beyond processed sugar). Afterwards the Japanese did not have enough time to marshal the island's resources effectively in industry. We know this was not because they failed to make an effort—it was because they started too late.

Certain types of heavy investment had received their close attention ever since earlier years. Railway construction, for example, was pushed forward with enthusiasm from the very first. The time schedule of progress in expanding the public railroads was far ahead of their actual utilization (see Fig. 6). This was an investment which

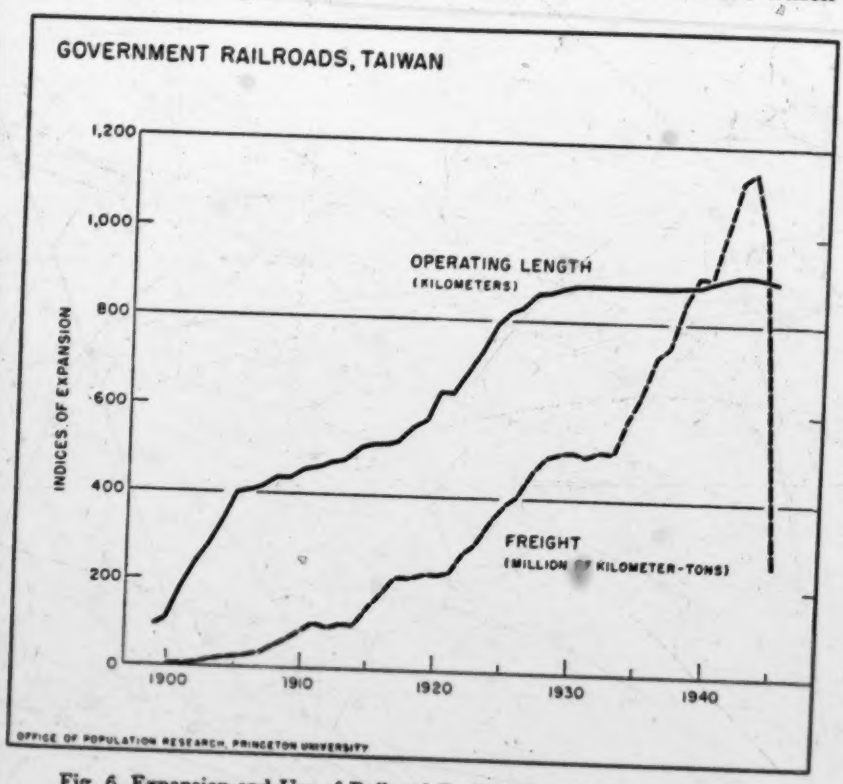

Fig. 6. Expansion and Use of Railroad Facilities in Taiwan, 1900-1945.

52:Barclay S-5 (nodate)1954 AD1 Formosa AD1

the Japanese undertook primarily in anticipation of long-term benefit, without being able to justify its initial cost for many years. In terms of kilometer-tons of freight carried, the railroad made only partial use of its physical facilities until late in the colony's existence.[33] This sort of schedule was also followed in establishing a system of improved roads and trails over the island. In both cases, Japanese had to bear the burden of ambitious engineering projects when they could least afford it, for basic transportation networks are more valuable as networks than they are piecemeal.

Public irrigation was a project closely tied to agriculture, and followed a different timetable (see Fig. 7). After 1895 there was no large

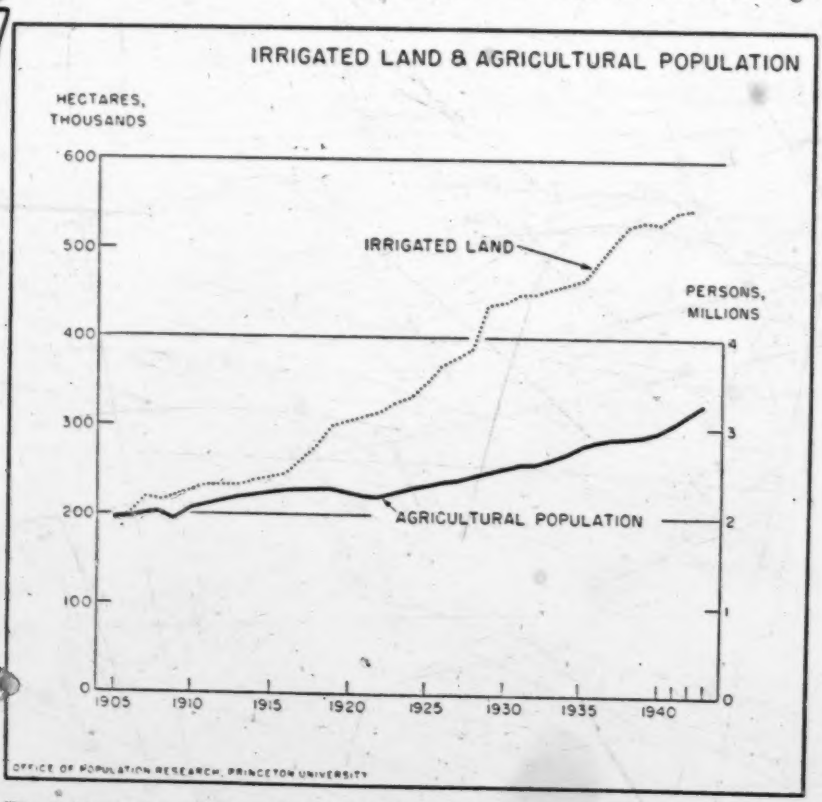

Fig. 7. Expansion of Irrigation and Agricultural Population in Taiwan, 1905-1943.

[33] Then it suddenly became overtaxed with cargo connected with the war, stemming from industrial growth and from Taiwan's role as a military base. See OPNAV, Civil Affairs Handbook, *Taiwan—Economic Supplement* (1944), p. 60.